

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

Subject	Outreach Subcommittee Meeting #7 Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework	Date	September 17, 2021
Facilitator	Meryem Karad	Time	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Location	WebEx - https://governor.virginia.gov/i/bmu2b	Scribe	Emily Sokol

Invitees/Attendees			
#	Name	Organization/Role	Attended?
Outreach Subcommittee Members and Staff Advisors			
1.	Ashley Montgomery	Chair – Associate Designer, Hanbury	Y
2.	David K. Paylor	Vice Chair – Director, Department of Environmental Quality	
3.	Meryem Karad	Staff Advisor – Assistant Secretary of Natural Resources	Y
4.	John Bateman	Regional Planner, Northern Neck Planning District Commission	Y
5.	Omer Yousuf	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer	Y
6.	Jill Bieri	Director of Virginia Coast Reserve, The Nature Conservancy	Y
7.	Alec Brebner	Executive Director, Crater Planning District Commission	
8.	Dr. Jessica Whitehead	Executive Director, Institute for Coastal Adaptation and Resilience	Y
9.	Martha Heeter	Executive Director, Plan RVA	
10.	Traci Munyan	Program Administrative Manager, Department of Housing and Community Development	Y
11.	Lee Hutchinson	Resiliency Program Analyst, Department of Housing and Community Development	
12.	Corey Miles	Coastal Resources Program Manager, Northern Virginia Regional Commission	Y
13.	Kate Gibson	Deputy Director, George Washington Regional Commission	
14.	Kristin Owen	Floodplain & Dam Safety Manager, Henrico County	Y
15.	Kimberly Cain	Special Assistant Director, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	
16.	Leigh Mitchell	Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Coordination, Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe	
Scheduled Speakers			
17.			
Designated Alternates			
18.	Sarah Stewart	Alternate for Martha Heeter, PlanRVA	
19.	Carol Considine	Alternate for Jessica Whitehead	
20.	Luke Peters	Alternate for Kate Gibson, GWRC	Y
21.	Renee Hoyos	Alternate for David Paylor, Environmental Justice Director	Y
Subcommittee Advisors			
22.	Emily Steinhilber	Environmental Defense Fund	Y
23.	Jay Ford		Y
Other Participants			
24.	Shurui Zhang		Y
25.	M. Moore		Y
26.	Brent Hunsinger		Y
27.	Grace Tucker		Y
Consultant Support			
28.	Emily Sokol	Vision Planning and Consulting	Y
29.	Deepa Srinivasan	Vision Planning and Consulting	Y

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

Agenda/Minutes		
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1.	Welcome/FOIA Preamble/Roll Call	<p>Meryem Karad welcomed all to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. She read required language passed by the General Assembly, allowing bodies such as the Subcommittee to meet for the sole purpose of sharing information and hearing presentations.</p> <p>She then took roll for the Outreach Subcommittee members and reported that a quorum had been achieved. Meryem discussed guidelines for the virtual meeting and requested that public attendees ask questions in the chat box, which she would moderate throughout the meeting. If a disruption occurs or anyone has any connectivity issues, please contact Meryem Karad at meryem.karad@governor.virginia.gov or 804-786-0044.</p>
2.	Discussion Regarding the 90% Draft Document	<p>Ashley Montgomery reported that the Governor’s Office is looking for comments on the 90% draft document as soon as possible. Ashley provided a review of how the beginning of the draft document is to be laid out, with the initial pages documenting the continuation of efforts, the resiliency fund, and the history of impacts. The document includes an analysis of current and future coastal hazards, including compounding factors, as well as riverine and rainfall flooding. The document identifies these problems and the need to focus on them in future iterations of the document, recognizing the limitations of the first iteration. Meryem asked all Subcommittee members to read through the 90% draft document that was provided to the Subcommittee and make note of any language that needs to be addressed and changes that need to be made.</p> <p>Ashley then opened the floor to the Subcommittee to provide comment on the first spread, which outlines five types of flooding experienced by coastal Virginia communities.</p> <p>Discussion Point- Dr. Jessica Whitehead: I appreciate the way that it explains all five of these types of flooding, and each one mentions sea level rise. Is there a page in the 90% draft document that explains what sea level rise is and the connection between sea level rise and these types of flooding? Most people in government understand this connection, but as a public-facing document, the connection between the two should be made clearer. Is there a document that we are not seeing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Omer Yousuf: Is there a way that the diagram can represent where sea level rise and flooding will change in the future? - Ashley: It is important for that context to exist. Because this is a major point, it needs resonate with people so that they understand the timeline of what this will look like and how it will impact them in the future. There are other pieces of the document that we have not been given, but I have not seen a page explicitly explaining this connection. I will make that note. - Emily Steinhilber: I think it is an important comment to make, even if we are not seeing all pages. If the information is included somewhere else, then they can delete that comment and move on. - Corey Miles: This spread seems to explain flooding in the context of today’s conditions, but not in the context of future conditions. We might want to address that these types of flooding will have worsening effects over time. We should attach those future impacts to a scenario to make it resonate with the audience. - Ashley: Agreed. There are a couple of maps in the document that speak to that, but it is not in plain language like on this page. - John Bateman: This particular spread is just a snapshot. The real meat of the language is in the 90% document. When localities and PDCs go to apply for grant funding, it will not come from this snapshot, it will come from the 90% document.

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

Agenda/Minutes		
#	Agenda Item	Minutes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: Yes, that is true. However, much of what is in these spreads is what the public will be viewing. We want to make sure that it works for all parties, as they will be tools for all individuals to learn from. <p>Ashley then transitioned to the next spread, which provided an overview of the Hampton Roads PDC and how its communities are being impacted by flooding. She reported that Dewberry would be creating similar spreads for each of the eight coastal Planning District Commissions. Ashley opened the floor to the Subcommittee members to provide comments.</p> <p>Discussion Point- Omer Yousuf: With regard to how this information is being communicated, I am trying to personally understand how equity considerations are being defined here and why.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: The definition of equity is not listed here. - Meryem: There is a section of the 90% document that speaks to the social vulnerability index, but it is important that this spread makes sense to the reader. Is this brief description of equity considerations clear in the larger context? - Omer: I believe this is the first discussion of equity at the PDC level in this document. Is this a good introduction into the conversation of equity? - Ashley: We have only been given pieces of the document. Dewberry has written an entire section on equity and how they define social vulnerability. Do you think that should come first in the document, or would you like to see that more robustly incorporated on this page? - Omer: I think the chronology is fine, but I do think that the definition of equity should be established early on. There is an interest in representing it, because its application exists on this page, but I believe it could be executed more robustly. <p>Discussion Point- John: There is a lengthy definition of equity on page 4 of the full document. We expressed a concern with all of these maps, as they rely on data from the census, which is not granular enough to truly identify localities and their vulnerabilities. That is a limitation of the data that needs to be addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: Yes, that is a concern that has been voiced from the beginning. There are some data sets that are proprietary but go down to a more granular level. What recommendations can we make to them? - Luke Peters: It is my understanding that if you wanted to get more granular, you have to go to a specialized location to obtain the information. They will not let you leave with anything in hand. We should at least mention the data as a significant limitation. - John: There are things the Commonwealth of Virginia can do to develop their own granular data sets. When we are determining need, it is the purview of this Subcommittee to mention that there should be a planning process where outreach that identifies areas of highest need are required. - Corey: I agree. It is important to characterize the different types of vulnerability in terms of disparity. For Northern Virginia, the overall income level is very high. However, if you do not look at the disparity between high earners and low earners, you do not capture this information. - John: You are right. I have long had a problem with the fiscal stress index because it does not provide this context at the granular scale.

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

Agenda/Minutes		
#	Agenda Item	Minutes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Whitehead: We are not going to solve the problem of the limitations of these indices for decision making in this document. We need some context recognizing that it is a tool but not the end all be all diagnostic. That language is important to include. Anybody who thinks that, because the index exists, you can make decisions on it, they do not understand this process. - John: These indices are no replacement for proper planning and community level planning. The community outreach subcommittee should suggest that any program should heavily favor community level planning to determine where need exists. - Ashley: How do we create projects through a holistic engagement process? How can that information be shared further up the chain at higher levels of government? We need to deepen and define that recommendation as this work continues with DCR and with ongoing outreach efforts. <p>Discussion Point- Omer: There are sections of the document on equity and resilience that address the issue. I would like your notes on my concern, which is that there are sections that demonstrate clearly how equity will be implemented, but there are other places where the connection does not seem clear. The entire 90% document starts off with a discussion on equity where it does not seem clear how equity is being covered or how the survey summary is reflecting how equity is being addressed. My concern is that those need to be better connected so there is a clear understanding of where we are right now and where we would like that to go in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John: One thing we mentioned in our review in the Northern Neck is that the demographics of those being impacted by flooding were overwhelmingly white. There are limitations in the data because it was not looking at riverine or rainfall flooding, so it did not paint an accurate picture of exposure for communities. - Ashley: It goes back to the data being used not reflecting vulnerable spaces appropriately. There needs to be a better recommendation for how we implement equity in the master plan. This is not picking up everyone, because it is not considering all exposures. The page before mentions riverine and rainfall flooding, but the data is not taking that into account. This is not accurately reflecting disparity. - Corey: For the initial graph showing demographics- the percentage of households in a coastal floodplain and a breakdown of exposed populations by race- it appears that the white population is disproportionately affected by coastal flooding. Just with that snapshot, it tells a very limited story. It almost is better not to include it because it is misperceiving the data. The white individuals who live on the water are mostly wealthier. In order to live in a coastal location with a beautiful view, you have to pay more money. - John: It is the same mistake we have always made, and it is perpetuating that mistake. - Dr. Whitehead: That terminology “disproportionate impact” is key. During my experience of being involved in a disaster recovery event, the disproportionate impact was created by rainfall flooding, not saltwater. And those experiencing the disproportionate impact of rainfall flooding were lower income and minorities. - John: I do not want to discount that there is a reason why local government would want to protect high value properties. Some context should be provided that demonstrates how some have chosen to live on the coast and chosen this risk, while others have not chosen this risk.

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: What about this page is necessary, and what needs to be included in another section? Should there be a greater section that addresses how the inadequate data may cause a misrepresentation of these issues? - John: There is a part of the document that addresses limitations. This is a snapshot that will not be perfect. - Ashley: But this snapshot is creating a story that is not accurate. - John: That is correct. - Ashley: So, should it even be there? They need to think about how these spreads are put together. People are going to look at these graphics first. How do we make sure that conversation is fluid and accurately represent what is happening? - John: That is correct. If it is so different from the ground truth, then it should not be included. - Ashley: We do not know how big the difference is, as our underserved community outreach meetings have not been completed. We should think through how the planning pages are put together. It is not connecting from one page to the next. It is not providing an honest story. - John: My perspective does differ from yours on one point. At the smaller scale, localities know where the issues lie. They know where the need is. The onus should be on them to identify their need. - Corey: In Northern Virginia, we have data that goes into more detail and goes into way more depth than census tracts. We are happy to share it. We have data that shows islands of different disadvantaged populations. At this point, I doubt it can be incorporated. - John: We encourage localities to share that information. That is what the charettes were for, to provide detailed local information. For Northern Neck, we did not have a data set to provide. - Deepa Srinivasan (in chat): Corey, please share this information on the LIC in northern VA so we may target our outreach efforts in these areas in the spring of 2022. - Corey (in chat): Northern Virginia health Foundation Report https://novahealthfdn.org/getting-ahead-report/ - Dr. Whitehead: A recommendation would be, if we have this model from Northern Virginia, in the next iteration we could have similar granularity across all PDCs, as they do in that region. - John: Absolutely, that data comes through thorough outreach. <p>Discussion Point- Omer: I think the discussion we have had about meaningful outreach and telling a more complete story is something we need to convey to the writers moving forward. Have we concluded that the visuals should be removed? Within this document, the concern I have is the definition offered- where is it coming from? We have worked hard to define equity in our office. That is my last question for this slide deck.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meryem: The definition comes from a combination of federal definitions. That is a good question to pose and ask them to provide that information. I think if you have a suggestion for a redefinition, that would be helpful. - Omer: We can definitely pass that on from our office. I know this is trying to use federal resources whenever possible, but we have tried to understand what equity can be for Virginia in the future, and we have worked really hard through community outreach to create that vision and definition of equity.

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

Agenda/Minutes		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meryem: I can send a note to the Dewberry team to get the answer to that question. I can work with you on creating better defining language that you might suggest. - Ashley: I would like to propose that these visuals be taken out. I have not yet written that down as my recommendation, but I feel like the visuals are misleading. - Emily: What you just said might be most useful. The comment is that the visuals are misleading and do not tell the whole story- it will give them an idea of what is missing and allow them to make changes that might create a more direct and not misleading story. That is very useful. - Ashley: All of this information is being recorded. I will send you the Miro board document. The meeting is being recorded and there will be minutes. We will need to discuss how these recommendations will be voted on by the Subcommittee and approved before sending to Rear Admiral Ann Phillips. - John: Rear Admiral Phillips mentioned that they need recommendations as soon as possible. There is a way around having to vote on the recommendations. - Meryem: If we can get all comments to Ashley and David and give individuals an opportunity to have their feedback provided, the chairs can compile those recommendations. <p>Discussion Point- Dr. Whitehead: There is a climate plan that used EPA and NEPA guidance to map potentially underserved communities. We could not ask for this to be redone, but it could be a good recommendation for the kinds of data that need to be produced for the next iteration for communities to move forward. This example could provide some ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: We could make that a recommendation for how we incorporate this information in a more holistic way and improve the process in the next iteration. <p>Discussion Point- Ashley: Omer, have we had a discussion on the comments you had? Are you comfortable with how we are representing equity in our recommendations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Omer: We have had a good discussion about it and have created meaningful recommendations. I have a few more questions regarding the 90% document, the stakeholder survey, etc., but we can address that in the future. - John: I will continue to review the documents sent to the Subcommittee. I will make track change comments. - Ashley: All Subcommittee members, please review the document on your own time and provide your feedback so that we can make holistic recommendations. <p>Ashley then transitioned to the next spread, which works in connection with the previous spread by discussing equity in resilience. She recognized that the graphic speaks more to what is happening on the ground, and that the two spreads need to be thought about together for each planning district. She reported that the writers might not have time to do that, but that there is no harm in making that recommendation to make sure that an honest story is being told.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John: we requested that any page referencing a particular PDC be provided to that PDC and allow for their comment. - Luke: For this page, some of the language seems to be demonizing people living on the water because they have money, or making it seem like it is their fault that

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee

Agenda/Minutes		
#	Agenda Item	Minutes
		<p>others are experiencing problems. I understand that they are direct quotes, but I do fear the aggressiveness of the quotes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: We definitely do not want to demonize anyone. A recommendation could be to watch the quotes that are presented and ensure that they are not inflammatory. - John: I think it is perfectly fine within in the context of the person who made the comment. It underscores our lack of focus on communities. - Renee Hoyos: I am seeing this spread for the first time, but perhaps it would be helpful just to remove the word “dirt.” It is a slur used against poor people. - Ashley: I think that is an important point to make. And to John’s point, we have not been looking at equity and disparity. This page should be formatted to work with the planning district, instead of a generalized view of what equity is. - John: We could replace the comments with actual data about how much FEMA spends on elevating coastal properties vs. replacing sewer systems and addressing those problems. - Dr. Whitehead: We do have to be careful because there are very specific things and problems that FEMA identifies as qualifying for grant funds. - John: Yes, of course. That was just an example. <p>Ashley then transitioned to review the Centralized Survey, since there were no other comments. She encouraged the Subcommittee to email her, David, and Meryem by the middle of next week so that the notes can be compiled.</p> <p>Discussion Point- Omer: My questions have more to do with the summaries that have been written on the survey. For the charts within the document, it is difficult to know what they are discussing because there are ellipses – graphical representation issue. The Centralized Stakeholder Survey also reached out to community organizations. It is important to look at what community organizations were reached out to. Are there any recommendations that we have about who can be outreached to in the future as we continue this process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: I do not know the full and complete list of who the survey was sent to. They did use a list that this Subcommittee put together of organizations that we are connected to. Some people did not have emails, others had moved on. I believe it would be good to do a gap analysis of this process regarding who the survey was sent to. We can get that information from VPC, I’m sure. We need to get that complete list. - Omer: Yes, I agree, and I think it will be important to do that gap analysis. - Deepa (in chat): Yes, we can provide you with the channels for the Centralized Stakeholder Survey. The decentralized survey was open to all. <p>Ashley then transitioned to the next spread, which was a map representing the impact, exposure to, and vulnerability of transportation systems to flooding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corey: This map includes the number of road segments inundated by flood type. I am missing the point when it comes to social equity. Is this part of the outreach section? If we are thinking about things in the context of equity, the number of roadways that are exposed to flood hazard does not fully reflect population impacts. There is more to the story than what is on this page. In Northern Virginia,

**Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Outreach Subcommittee**

Agenda/Minutes		
#	Agenda Item	Minutes
		<p>there are multiple ways to get around. How do we connect this back to social vulnerability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashley: This can be tied to the way that they set up the data for their community resources analysis. For me, I would overlay the social vulnerability and transportation maps, but they are not represented together here. - Corey: Right, you would think those maps would be presented together to show how this would have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable and low-income communities. You need to look to see where there is public transportation infrastructure in addition to roadways. In our area, more people are vulnerable to flooding when they rely on public transportation instead of personal vehicles. When public transit is impacted by flooding, that is their only way to get around. - Omer: The way that this is phrased, it is limited. I wonder if there is mention of infrastructure that is accessible to disabled residents, and how that infrastructure is impacted by flooding. If we expand transportation to discuss more about mobility, it could create avenues for that discussion or representation. - Meryem: That has also come up in the community meetings. - Ashley: So, it seems that there is a need after this graphic to have a spread that is focused on how equity intersects with transportation. - Corey: If there is an opportunity to link the two data sets, that would be helpful.
3.	Public Comment Period	Ashley opened the floor for public comment. Meryem reported that no one signed up for public comment, and no individuals offered public comment at this time.
4.	Submitting Comments and Feedback on the 90% Draft Document	Ashley reminded the Subcommittee members to provide comments and discussion points from the group to be compiled. She reported that they would send the compiled recommendations to the Subcommittee members to ensure everyone was informed and could provide insight on the recommendations. She encouraged the Subcommittee members to read look through the entire word document and think about it in the context of what was discussed in this meeting. Meryem reported that Subcommittee members should provide this feedback to Ashley and David by September 24 th .
5.	Wrap-Up and Adjourn	Ashley adjourned the meeting at 11:55 am.

Action Items			
#	Action Item	Owner (Organization)	Due Date
1.	Provide all feedback on the 90% draft document.	Subcommittee Members	9/24

If you have any questions, please contact Emily Sokol, Vision Planning and Consulting, at esokol@vision-pc.net.